

February 28, 2023

Testimony to the Connecticut Assembly, Joint Housing Committee, in support of HB 6781.

Dear Sen. Moore, Rep. Luxemburg, and distinguished members of the Joint Housing Committee:

My name is Ashley Jamison, and I am a lifelong resident of Connecticut, a mother, and a renter. I am writing to share my strong support of HB 6871, amended to protect renters by making sure records of withdrawn and no-fault eviction actions are not online to haunt renters.

Since 2021, my landlord has served me with seven Notices to Quit to try to evict me. I've endured seven different eviction actions. In the first five actions, the eviction was dismissed, and I was allowed to stay on the premises. But still, the summary process actions remain on my public record. I was served my sixth notice in August 2022. But even though my landlord withdrew that attempted eviction months later, it is still on my public record. In November 2022, I was served my seventh notice. This time, my landlord has agreed to mediate privately, instead of going in court. But still, this summary process action is on my record. Although a court has never evicted me, each of the seven actions remains on my public record. As I understand it, my record will show the seven summary process actions for years.

I am a single mother of four children. My goal, like that of every parent, is to provide my children with a roof over their heads, a bed to sleep in, and a safe place to thrive. The summary process actions on my public record are robbing me of that opportunity. I have been trying extremely hard to find a place to live, but I cannot find one. Day and night, I have viewed dozens of properties across Connecticut. Each time I find a possible place to live, the same thing happens: I pay a \$40 housing application fee, the potential landlord checks my public record, they see the summary process actions, and then they deny my application. I typically ask the landlords the reason for the denial. I typically get the same response: "You have evictions on your record, ma'am." The landlords do not seem to care that the summary process actions did not result in an actual eviction. In their minds, a summary process action is equivalent to an eviction. I have spent hundreds of dollars in application fees—money that I need to care for my children—just to have my application denied because of the summary process actions on my record.

I desperately urge the committee to support HB 6781 for families like mine. If this bill had passed, I would have found a place to live; instead, I have battled through seven attempted evictions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

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